



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta
an Duine agus Comhionannas
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission



Cork
City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí

Implementing the Public Sector Equality & Human Rights Duty in Cork City Council

The Strand Hotel, Limerick.

Friday, 17th November 2017

Michael Burke, A/Director of Human Resource Management
& Organisational Reform.

Scope of the Pilot

- Identify and build on human rights and equality infrastructure already in place
- Assess the human rights and equality issues across all Council functions and services for both customers and staff
- Begin to put in place policies, plans and actions to address the issues identified



Process undertaken to Date

- Presented to SMT 16th January 2017 to explain Public Sector Duty and outline pilot project
- Working group established with cross directorate representation
- Working group has explored the human rights and equality values relevant to Cork City Council (Workshop 1- 9th June)
- Working group has begun assessment process of the human rights and equality issues relevant to functions of CCC (Workshop 2- 26th June)



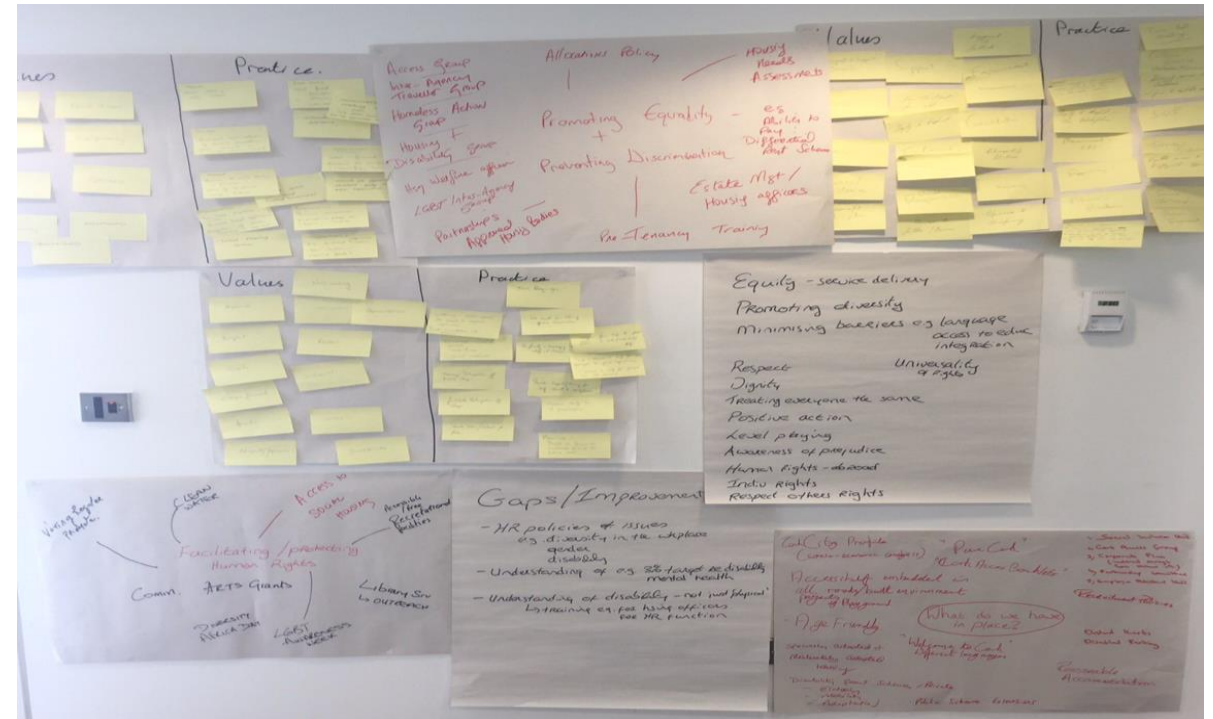
Steps for pilot:



Workshop 1, 9th June



- 2 questions:
 - What equality and human rights values are important for Cork City Council?
 - What do these values mean in practice for Cork City Council?



Workshop 1: Defining Human Rights and Equality Values that are Important to Cork City Council & Considering the implications

1. Respect and Dignity
2. Diversity and Inclusivity
3. Participation and Engagement
4. Equal access and fair treatment
5. Transparency



Workshop 1: What do these values mean in practice for Cork City Council?

- Communications / Consultations- internal & public
- Customer focus at all levels
- Access to information, FOI
- Community networking
- Fairness- consistent application of policies and procedures
- Taking diversity into account while applying rules
- Transparency in application processes
- Encourage and facilitate participation of minority groups
- “door always open” ethos
- Free events
- Safe space for staff to be diverse
- Empowering staff in decision ownership
- HR policies- Dignity at Work, Code of Conduct etc.
- Provision of supports and training
- Job/promotion opportunities (equitable access)
- Office space itself- working environment



Workshop 2, 26th June



Workshop 2: Current Human Rights and Equality Policies and Practices

- Various council services protect peoples human rights (e.g. right to health and environmental protections etc.)
- Provision of social, recreational and educational services
- Provision of social housing and associated policies
- Social Inclusion, Outreach and welfare policies, access groups
- Traveller engagement
- Human resources policies; disability policy and officer, dignity at work, open and fair recruitment processes, reasonable accommodation etc.
- Public consultations and LCDC representation
- Voter registration
- Diversity and inclusion events- LGBT awareness, Africa Day etc.



Assessment: Human Resources / Corporate Services

Issue	Related value
Diversity in workplace (disability, gender, ethnicity)	Diversity and Inclusion
Gender - promotional opportunities in workplace	Diversity and Inclusion
Dignity at work – lack of awareness of policy and procedures	Dignity and Respect
Staff consultation	Participation and Engagement
Networking across organisation internally	Participation and Engagement
Training and capacity around human rights and equality for staff	Participation and Engagement
Development opportunities for staff	Participation and Engagement
Language and training around cultural diversity for staff	Diversity and Inclusion
Staff access to their own personal information in HR	Transparency
Staff well being and mental health and in the workplace	Dignity and Respect
Quality of work for people with disabilities in workplace	Equality, Equal Access and Fair Treatment/ Participation and Engagement



Assessment: Service Delivery

Issue	Related value
Estate management- residents' participation and consultation	Participation and Engagement
Accessibility of playgrounds and recreational facilities (for children, elderly, disabled)	Diversity and Inclusion
Accessibility not embedded in all projects from design stages	Diversity and Inclusion
Recognising customer profile of the Council has changed in recent years	Diversity and Inclusion
Understanding what groups are not accessing services	Participation and Engagement
Public realm areas- accessibility improvements	Diversity and Inclusion/ Participation and Engagement



Assessment: Service Delivery cont.

Issue	Related value
Consultation with disability groups on public realm	Participation and Engagement
Raising awareness with public about Council's services in customer accessible way	Participation and Engagement
Web design accessibility	Diversity and Inclusion
Anti-social behaviour- staff management of	Dignity and Respect
Frontline staff understanding cultural differences of customers	Diversity and Inclusion
Equality proofing services	Equality, Equal Access and Fair Treatment



Assessment: Policy Making/ Implementation

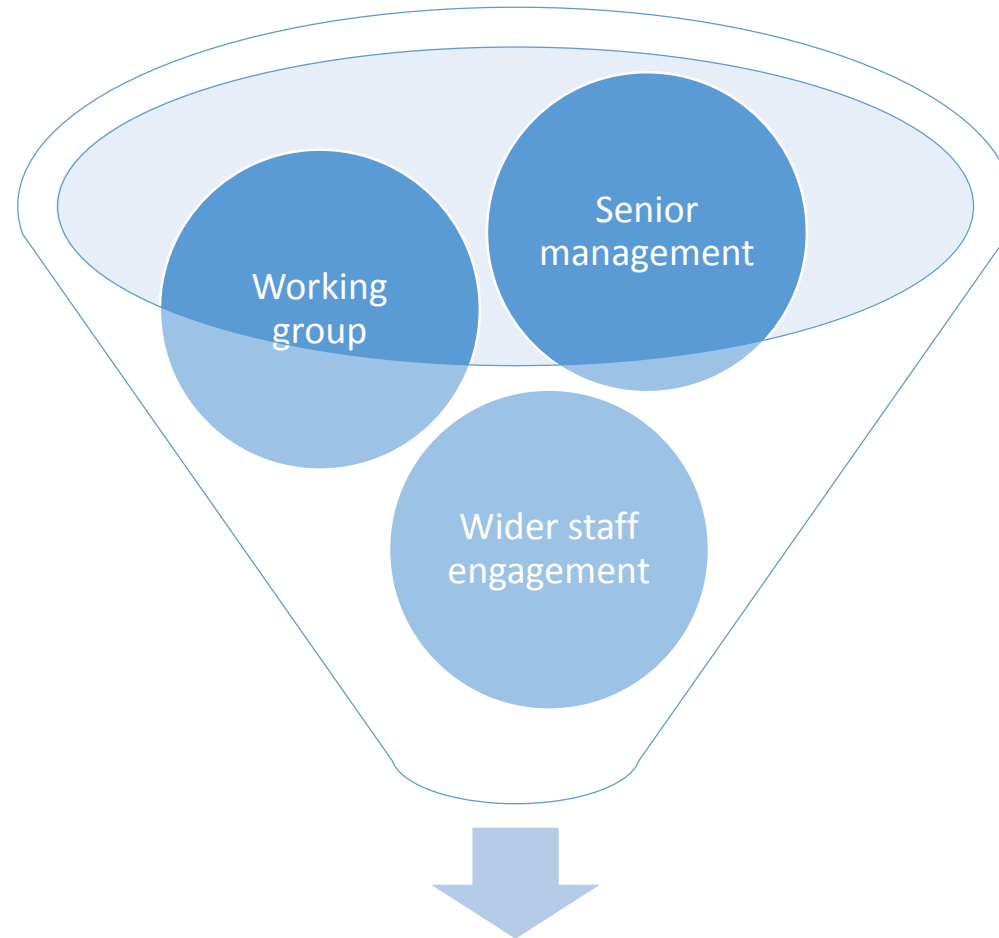
Issue	Related value
Consideration of equality built into project systems from beginning in formalised way	Equality, Equal Access and Fair Treatment
Understanding of Social Inclusion	Diversity and Inclusion
Are aims of Social Inclusion Unit mainstreamed across the organisation	Diversity and Inclusion
Consultations generally- minimum requirement can seem adversarial rather than consultative	Participation and Engagement
How human rights and equality are represented in Corporate Plan, principles and practice of organisation	Transparency
Checklist could be built into systems for all new projects to consider equality and human rights impacts	Transparency
Challenges in relation to Housing Supply	Participation and Engagement



Staff Engagement/Consultation Event:

- A day long staff engagement/consultation event was held in The Imperial Hotel in Cork on the 26th October.
- Extremely Interactive Workshop with more than 40 staff from all grades in the Council.
- Very valuable feedback as part of assessment process.
- IHREC film crew in attendance.
- Video being compiled with footage of workshop activities, interviews with City Council Staff, visits to City Council offices/buildings and delivery of council services.

Next steps for assessment



Initial Assessment



Next steps

- Council are now moving towards identifying a number of initial action steps to be progressed as part of the implementation phase.
- Initial action areas:
 - Embedding dignity and respect at principles & practices into Council activities.
 - Identify and implementing diversity initiatives in relation to Council services.
- Begin process of working up actions, plans and policies to be included in next Corporate Planning cycle to address items raised in the assessment process



Tangible outputs of pilot

- Cork City Council progressively embeds the Public Sector Duty in its current management, policy development and service delivery processes
- **Guidance** on “Getting Started” with the Public Sector Duty produced for Local Authorities
- **Assessment conducted** of equality and human rights across all Council functions and services
- Council Action Plan developed on equality and human rights
- Human rights and equality statement and outcomes developed that can be incorporated into the Council’s corporate plans and strategic plans
- Case study developed that highlights Cork City Council’s leadership on equality and human rights
- Cork City Council available to present on experiences at IHREC events



Tangible outcomes of pilot

- IHREC better equipped to advise and guide public bodies on implementing their Public Sector Duty.
- Better awareness of the Public Sector Duty through-out the Local Authority sector
- Best practice captured and disseminated
- Human rights and equality improved for Cork City Council staff and customers
- Cork City Council continues to design and provide responsive services and customer care that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base
- Cork City Council continues to attract, develop and promote high calibre staff

